

25th anniversary



ADULT TRAINING CENTRE

Brampton

1947-1972

The Brampton story began in February, 1947, when thirty-seven young men from Guelph Reformatory took up residence in a complex of military huts which had provided living and training quarters for soldiers during the Second World War.

INTRODUCTION

The Ontario Training Centre, as it was then called, was an entirely new concept in the province for dealing with young offenders between the ages of 16 and 24 who were free of serious personality problems. The Centre was the first correctional facility in the province in which offenders were not under constant supervision; there were no bars on windows and no security fence surrounding the grounds. This setting encouraged students to develop a sense of trust in themselves which, in turn, contributed to their positive response to the training and treatment programs. Innovations included classification based on psychological testing and programming designed to meet the individual needs of each student.

Through the combination of educational and vocational training, individual and group counseling, and a varied recreation program, every attempt is made to help each student form positive social attitudes. The open-setting philosophy of the Centre has gained acceptance in the local community, so that now, twenty-five years later, youths regularly attend school or train for a number of trades within the community. Accommodation is provided at the Centre for 144 students, who are selected from the reception wing at Guelph Correctional Centre. A committee, consisting of a psychologist from the correctional centre and the Superintendents of Brampton and Burtch Adult Training Centres, select students for the training centre program according to age, level of intelligence, emotional stability, training needs, and type of sentence.

A wide-ranging orientation program is provided for all new students during their first two weeks in the institution. This is conducted by treatment and correctional staff assisted by the senior students. The latter participate in group discussions, which are an important part of the orientation period for the new arrivals and which serve to familiarize them with the purpose and methods of the Centre's programs. Individual and group therapeutic counseling sessions and a short, intensive course in human relations are conducted by professionally trained personnel, and staff are encouraged to develop helping relationships with individual students in order to give them guidance and assistance.

PROGRAM



Initially, many new students encounter difficulties in learning to cope with group living within the institution. A number of the student body form a group to assist these students over the initial period of adjustment and to help them when difficulties arise. The group's main function is to give assistance to those who must learn to control their behaviour and direct it into more constructive channels. In addition, an Assessment Committee composed of staff also provides assistance to the troubled student and gives advice, encouragement and direction to the students' Management Control Group.

The Student Council is an elected, representative group of students which acts as an important forum for expressing new ideas and airing complaints about any aspect of the program where students are involved. The Council, in effect, is the pulse of the student body and is an excellent indicator of the state of institutional morale. The Superintendent, the Deputy Superintendent, the head teacher, treatment staff, senior staff members and other personnel attend Council meetings, but the proceedings are conducted by the students and decisions made at these weekly meetings affect the institutional life of every student. Much valuable training in conducting group meetings as well as in appropriate personal behaviour is thus obtained by each representative on the Council.

STUDENT COUNCIL

In addition, council members gain self-confidence while acting as guides for all visitors to the Centre, many of whom have commented favourably on the ability of these representatives to express the feelings of their fellow-students concerning the program in effect at Brampton.

Academic and vocational training play a major role in the Centre's total plan for the rehabilitation of students; the Centre keeps abreast of current trends in educational and trades training to meet the needs of students who will shortly be continuing their education or working in the community.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Grades nine and ten form the basis of the academic program, but for students working above these levels, Ontario Department of Education correspondence courses are available, and it is possible for some students to attend school in the local community.

Academic Instruction

Trades Training

All trades training courses at the Centre are open-ended so that a student may join a class when he is transferred to Brampton, regardless of the regular school year, and still gain experience before the completion of his sentence. Trades training is an integral part of the total rehabilitation program for the student, which hopefully he will continue in the community, either through on-the-job training or formal educational programs.

During the orientation period students are given vocational guidance covering apprenticeship, Canada Manpower sponsored courses which are available, and vocational training in the community. The trade shops at the Centre are Welding, Machine Shop, Construction, Small Engines, Woodworking, Electrical, Radio and TV, and Art, Silk Screen Process and Industrial Painting; each one is under the direction of a qualified tradesman.

Each student is given credit for skills he may have acquired previously, and is encouraged to proceed through the course of his choice, at his own speed, without undue competition from other students. The relationship and interaction between the various trades becomes obvious to students once they attain a proficient level in their own trade. An example of this and of the teamwork that develops can best be illustrated by the buildings which students have built under the supervision of the respective trade instructors during the past few years, i.e. the Chapel, the Small Engine and Machine Shop building, and the Horticulture, Construction and Motor Mechanics building.

Students in trade shops carry out much of the general maintenance of buildings and equipment and gain experience in the practical use of their trade through departmental projects such as the making of display items, flag poles, bookcases, and Christmas cards which are supplied each year to all inmates in the Department's institutions for their personal use.

One of the major undertakings by Brampton students during 1971 was their participation in the Department's display at the 1971 Canadian National Exhibition, which included on-the-spot production of silk-screen posters and lawn furniture. This was an opportunity to show the public some of the skills which these young men can develop at the Centre. It was hoped that employers would be encouraged to consider training centre students for employment after release.





The Centre's trades training staff visit technical schools and a local community college on a regular basis. Consultants from the Department of Education advise on the programs and a counselor from the Industrial Training Branch of the Department of Labour visits the school regularly to address the students and to give group and individual counseling.

At the present time the Centre is planning to integrate related shop programs by combining them for lessons on safety, blueprint reading, mathematics, estimating, and other areas they have in common, using a team-teaching format. Extensive use will be made of slides, films, and models, and key personnel from local industry will be invited to assist.

The success of the present trades training program has been brought about by the combined efforts of the staff and students, as well as the cooperation and assistance generously given by local Secondary Schools, Community Colleges, the Ontario Departments of Education and Labour, and Canada Manpower.

Staff cooks operate the food services at the Centre, and meals are planned on a six-week rotating menu, which meets Canada's dietary standards.

FOOD SERVICES

Selected students attend formal classes in quantity cooking and gain on-the-job experience in the operation of food services by working in the kitchen. As a result many students have found employment in restaurants, hotels and other catering facilities upon their discharge.

The Centre offers a well-balanced recreation program consisting of indoor and outdoor sports, clubs and related activities, including ball games, weightlifting, gymnastics, wrestling, and many other forms of athletic and field events. Teams in the Centre are organized on a residence basis, with each dormitory fielding one team in each sport to compete in an inter-residence sports schedule. Teams also compete in the local community leagues.

RECREATION

Leisure-time activities such as chess, Scrabble, and card games are also available for students in the evenings.

Club Program

Wherever possible, community resource persons and facilities are used in the varied Club Program. Many local groups compete with bridge and chess clubs at the Centre, and the Brampton Camera Club provides instructors and models for the students' camera club.

The Gavel Club received its charter from the Toastmasters International in 1959, and its 10th Anniversary Celebration was attended by a number of the five-hundred students who had participated in its activities during the ten-year period. The club holds debates, speech contests, and such special events as the yearly Burns' Night which, complete with bagpipes and a haggis, is the highlight of the year.

St. John Ambulance Brigade sponsors first-aid classes to prepare students for the certificate examination, and in the past fourteen years over 1,000 students have received certification.

The Variety Club uses student talent to present stage shows for the students as well as producing an Annual Christmas Show to which families and friends are invited. The active role taken by students in the writing and production of a number of plays and shows, including those given at Christmas and Easter, displays much artistic talent among the students.

CLINICAL SERVICES

Psychological and social work services are available to students on an individual and group counseling basis. The psychologist and social workers also take part in staff training for correctional officers, and the psychologist acts as a consultant to staff.

In order to plan an individual program for each student, information concerning his background, abilities, interests, attitudes, and problems is considered. This material accompanies the student when he is transferred from the Guelph Correctional Centre. Supplemental information obtained through personal interviews during the orientation process is also used. Medical care is provided to students by a full-time medical officer who may, where necessary, enlist the aid of appropriate medical specialists in the community to assist him in diagnosing and treating a student's medical problems. He also may arrange for attendance at or transfer to The Peel Memorial Hospital, Brampton, or The Toronto General Hospital. Complete dental services are also provided.

A registered nurse works in close cooperation with the medical officer and the dentist and supervises the sick bay.



LIBRARY SERVICES

Library services at Brampton are extensive and the wide selection of books is available to all students for both recreational and study purposes. A professional librarian supervises the library services and is assisted by students. Talks and discussions with the librarian encourage students to develop an interest in and appreciation of books.

CHAPLAINCY SERVICES

Chaplains are involved in a program of discussion groups, musical groups, and the planning of church services for special occasions, in addition to regular Sunday services to which students' families are invited. The Centre's All Saints Chapel was built entirely by students under staff supervision.

TEMPORARY ABSENCE PROGRAM (TAP)

The Temporary Absence Program at Brampton was started as a pilot project during the 1968-69 school year, when three students were enrolled at Central Peel Secondary School.

The program permits students to attend academic or vocational courses in the community during the day, returning to the Centre at night. Students may also be granted absences of from one to fifteen days on humanitarian grounds or for purposes which will further the rehabilitative process.

The academic and technical students who are enrolled at Central Peel and Brampton Centennial Secondary Schools have their tuition fees underwritten by the Department of Education. An important factor is that students attending these schools can be transferred back to their community secondary schools upon completion of their sentences.

Although students who enrol in two- and three-year Community College programs are required to pay tuition fees, several have applied for and been granted student loans. Every effort is made to enrol interested students in the Community College offering courses most appropriate to their needs. Students in this group have been enrolled at Centennial, Humber, Lambton, and Sheridan Community Colleges. In each case the student was transferred to the Correctional Centre nearest the college to enable him to attend classes daily. During the past two years Canada Manpower, through its Brampton office, has offered many courses to the students, with the same opportunities as are available to individuals in the community. For example, eligible students may draw a living allowance





after their release from the correctional system, until such time as they have completed the course underway. Under this program most students have been placed at Sheridan, but Lambton and Connestoga Colleges have also enrolled students.

An excellent selection of courses, varying in length from eight to forty weeks, is available to students who, to date, have participated in Heavy Equipment Operating and Servicing, Loader Dozer Operator, Industrial Orientation, Brake Press Set Up, Small Engines, Reinforced Fiber Glass, Welding, and Grades 11 and 12 upgrading.

The success of the total program is a credit to the students selected for the various courses and is due in no small measure to the cooperation and assistance given by the Schools, Colleges, and Canada Manpower.

Each student who applies himself to his program of studies receives a weekly allowance, which is graded into four steps. Every four weeks a committee discusses with the individual student the progress he has made over the month and decides on the matter of his upgrading. The allowance contains a compulsory savings portion which is paid to the student upon his discharge, and a spending portion which may be used while in the Centre to buy confections, tobaccos, and a variety of small items.

INCENTIVE ALLOWANCE

Community participation is vital to the success of any program for the offender. It has been most encouraging and rewarding over the past twenty-five years that so many private individuals, social groups, service clubs, and business firms in Brampton have offered their services and facilities to the students at this Centre.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND SOCIAL AGENCIES

Many social agencies arrange for members of their staff to visit the Centre to provide counseling and supportive assistance to students making post-release plans. These social agencies, together with service clubs, have given valuable aid to students who are making a sincere attempt to become law-abiding citizens. They have helped students to secure employment and to acquire living accommodation, and have helped many students and their families during the often difficult period of adjustment upon return to the community. The institution is deeply indebted to all community organizations and individuals who participate in the program.



AFTERCARE SERVICES

The service offered by aftercare officers to students at the Centre includes assistance in release planning, counseling with regard to problems students may face upon release, financial assistance to students to help them get reestablished in the community, and supportive supervision following their release from the Centre.

Aftercare officers carry out a community investigation, so that their decisions and advice for each student are based upon a thorough understanding of the student's background and particular circumstances. Individual interviews, requested either by the student or by the aftercare officer who is working closely with him, provide ongoing contact throughout the student's stay at the Centre.

Aftercare officers, as links with the community, are also involved in assessing applications made by students for participation in the temporary absence program.

CONCLUSION

The Brampton Adult Training Centre has endeavoured to develop and maintain a position in the forefront of those correctional institutions whose programs are directed to the rehabilitation of the youthful offender. The total efforts of the staff have been focussed on implementing the Department's Statement of Purpose, which reads in part ". . . to attempt to modify the attitudes of those in its care and to provide them with the kind of training and treatment that will afford them better opportunities for successful personal and social adjustment in the community."

The achievements of this Centre to date have been due to the dedication and untiring efforts of members of its staff, past and present, and to the continued support and interest of the local community throughout the Centre's twenty-five-year history. The Centre looks forward to continued progress in the years ahead.





Ontario Department of Correctional Services
Honourable C. J. S. Apps, Minister
L. R. Hackl, Deputy Minister

